
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, April 28, 2026



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Anale Burlew, CAL FIRE
Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation
Ken DaRosa, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Robert Troy, Office of Emergency Services
Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner's Office
Michael McGuire, Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation
Steve Hawks, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Todd Lando, Santa Barbara County Fire (virtual)
Chris Ochoa, California Building Industry Association (virtual)
Tristan Lanza, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California
Leonel Solorio, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (virtual)
Jordan Wells, California State Association of Counties
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

Members Absent

Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium
Lenya Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director
John Morgan, Assistant Deputy Director
Christine McMorrow, Deputy Director
Crystal Sujeski, Division Chief (virtual)
Mike Wink, Staff Chief
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief
Richard Brechbuehl, Deputy Chief (virtual)
Chris Ramey, Deputy Chief
Shaun Fairbanks, Deputy Chief
Randy Northup, Assistant Chief
Stephen Volmer, Battalion Chief (virtual)
Spencer Mallinger, Battalion Chief
Jennifer Renner, Battalion Chief (virtual)
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III
Mark Rosenberg, Research Data Manager (virtual)
Josh Mott, Information Officer II
Alisha Herring, Education, Outreach & Engagement Officer
Carrie Lewis, Analyst II
Justine Grafton, Analyst II (virtual)
Danh Dao, Analyst I

1. CALL TO ORDER 1:05 PM

Daniel Berlant

A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM by Daniel Berlant.

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

A quorum was not established with 13 committee members present in-person and 4 attending virtually.

C. Approval of past Meeting Minutes (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

- i. January 20, 2026
- ii. February 17, 2026
- iii. March 17, 2026

Motion: Sean McGlynn moved to accept the January 20, February 17, and March 17, 2026 meeting minutes; J. Lopez seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Approval of the April 28, 2026, meeting agenda (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

Motion: Robert Troy moved to accept the April 28, 2026 meeting agenda; Steve Hawks seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

2. UPDATES

A. Division Report

i. Wildfire Preparedness

1. Defensible Space

- 1) Statewide SRA total for fiscal year-to-date 2025-26:
 - i. 215,305 inspections, 86% of the goal (250,000)
- 2) Qualified Entity assessment year-to-date total for 2026:
 - i. 118 assessments
- 3) Qualified Entity Assessment year-to-date total for 2026:
 - i. 134 assessments
- 4) Schedule of Qualified Entity classes
 - i. May 4-5, Sacramento County
 - ii. June 12-13, Plumas County

2. Burn Permits

- 1) Residential burn permits will need to be renewed after May 1, 2026
- 2) Social media and public releases are scheduled to be released to remind the public that they need to re-apply for a new permit
- 3) 2025-26 fiscal year-to-date total:
 - i. Residential burn permit - 73,667
 - ii. Cultural Burn Permits: 1,203

3. Home Hardening

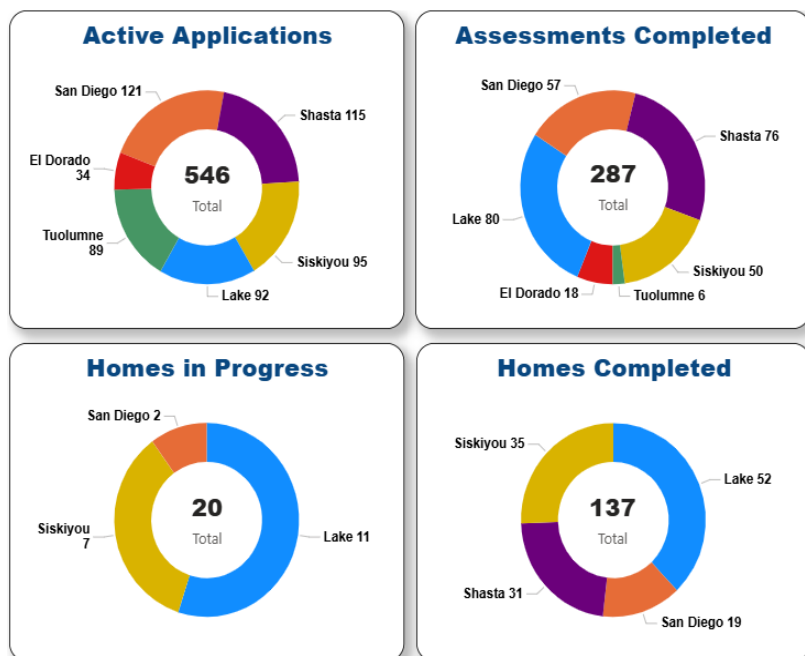
- 1) Reviewed the home hardening assessment reports, scope of work documents, and provided technical recommendations for home hardening retrofits
- 2) SB 514 developing the contractors training

- 3) Planning the June 2026 International Code Council ICC California Tour
 - 4) California Wildland Urban Interface Working Group
- 4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program
 - 1) Working with OEIS on updating Wildfire Mitigation Plan guideline updates
 - 2) PG&E is having a full-scale Public Safety Power Shutoff exercise April 27-May 1
 - 3) PG&E is having a Utility Wildfire Mitigation Conference May 13-15
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)
Fire Prevention Efforts FY 25/26
 - 1. Fuel Reduction Projects
 - 1) 646 projects, 129.8% of the goal
 - 2. Combined Fuel Reduction
 - 1) 62,133 acres treated, 62.1% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 30,185.3 acres
 - a) Northern Region: 21,392.6 acres
 - b) Southern Region: 8,792.8 acres
 - 2) Grant Projects: 28,589.8 acres
 - 3) CFIP Projects: 3,357.9 acres
 - 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
 - 1) 16,987.3 acres treated, 34% of the goal
 - 4. Pre-Fire Planning
 - 1) As of April 1, one positive Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Report (FTER) that improved firefighter ingress on the Deer incident in SLU.
 - 2) Continue to work with Vibrant Planet on contract completion and statewide implementation of the platform to units for pre-fire use.
 - 5. CalStats
 - 1) CAL FIRE is transitioning from ImageTrend to First Due as our next generation RMS, modernizing incident reporting with NERIS readiness, IRWIN integration, and true mobile functionality that allows real-time reporting in the field. Statewide training is being organized for the second week in June.
 - 2) The 2025 Redbook is currently in preliminary review.
 - ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance
 - 1. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program (CWMAP), Formerly Land Use Planning
 - 1) Safety Elements
 - i. Staff are engaged with numerous jurisdictions for Ses in the informal review process
 - ii. Two Ses were presented at RPC on April 14
 - a) Orange County and City of Brea
 - 2) Subdivision Review
 - i. 19 Fire Safety Surveys were presented at RPC last week for City of Newport Beach
 - a) Completes the first 5-year cycle
 - ii. Staff are engaged with numerous jurisdictions statewide that now qualify for review

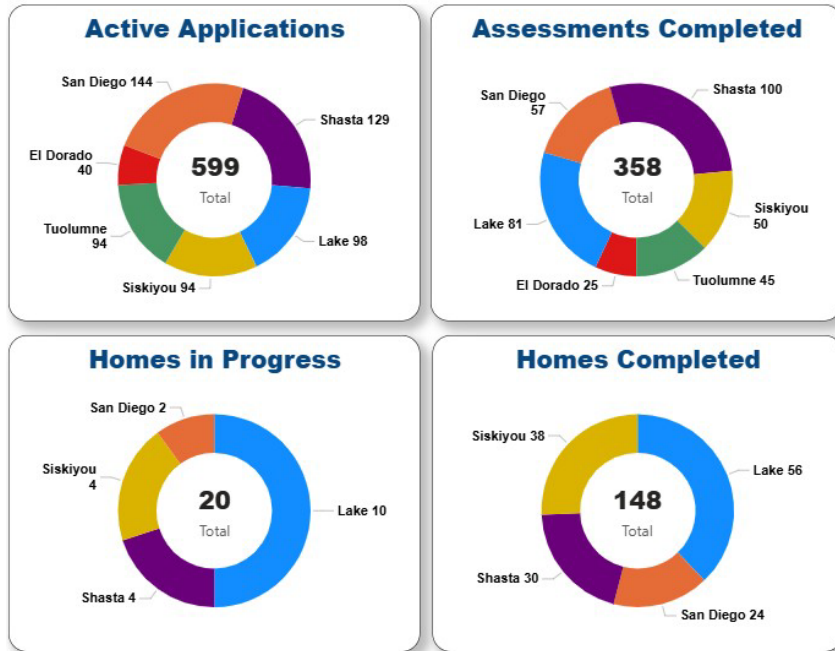
2. Intro to Land Use Planning for Wildfire
 - 1) Sign up now for classes this Spring:
 - i. Upcoming Classes
 - a) May 12 – Tahoe City
 - b) May 14 – Chico
 - 2) Sign-ups and more information on the [CWPM website](https://communitywildfire.org/land-use-planning-for-wildfires-trainings-california/) and at <https://communitywildfire.org/land-use-planning-for-wildfires-trainings-california/>
3. National Fire Protection Association, Firewise USA
 - 1) Currently 1558 communities in good standing
 - i. Numerous applications under review
 - ii. The Woodfords Firewise Community in Alpine County is the 1500th Firewise community in California!
 - a) Information on a celebration will be coming soon!
4. [CWMA Statewide Clearinghouse Data Center](#)
 - 1) Documents from Wildfire Planning Class
 - 2) Forum to share useful information

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update

i. March 17, 2026



ii. April 24, 2026

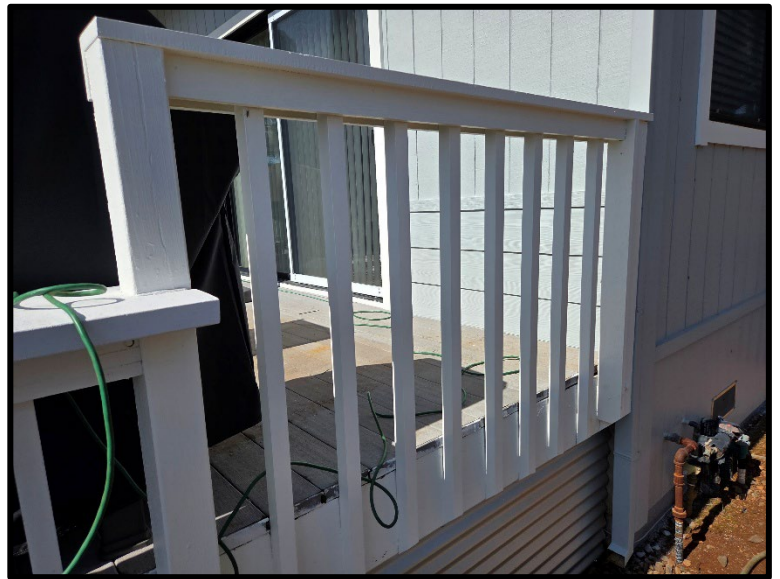


iii. Total Homes Completed by Year



iv. CWMPA Deck Retrofit





3. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Neighborhood Wildfire Mitigation Validation Program Workgroup
- B. Land Use Planning Workgroup

4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. [Wildfire Prevention and Communication](#) – Christine McMorrow, Alisha Herring, Kara Garrett, Josh Mott, CAL FIRE
This presentation explored how CAL FIRE works to reduce wildfire risk through proactive prevention strategies, including vegetation management, community preparedness programs, and science-driven mitigation efforts.
- B. [California Water Plan 2028 and Senate Bill \(SB\) 72 Implementation](#) – Eric Tsai, Department of Water Resources
Eric Tsai presented

5. ROUNDTABLE

- A. Lisa Lien-Mager – Have reported out previously about the streamlining effort underway to fast-track critical fuels reduction projects through the State of Emergency Program by the Governor in March 2025. This Friday marks the last day for projects to apply for that streamlining and there have been approximately 587 project applications with about 374 being approved. About half of those projects are underway or completed.
- B. Michael Maguire – Regarding the feedstock aggregation pilot program, another initiative out of LCI, we closed on the grants at the end of March. There were seven grantees across 20 counties that developed or modified system JPAs to be able to operate as feedstock brokers to develop markets for products coming out of fuel reduction treatments. Currently those JPAs are ramping up to launch their operations and LCI is currently working on a potential legislative initiative to help provide sustainable financing for that long-term. As we get deeper into what that mechanism might look like it will be brought to this committee because this goes beyond fuel reduction management but also looking at home and structure hardening financing as well.
- C. Ken DaRosa – the Office of Energy Safety is going to be holding a deep, internal conversation about the WMP process that just happened. Looking at some of the utilities and bearing down into some of the things that really stood out in terms of risk modeling and comparison across several of the utilities, looking at some that were particularly strong in ways that these utilities developed their WMPs, and calling out some things about vegetation management, transmission and a real focused look at those things. If there are any critical takeaways from this, they'll be shared with this group.
- D. J. Lopez – Held a meeting in Southern California regarding Zone Zero. Southern California is quite interested in the development of Zone Zero. The meeting was well attended and there were plenty of comments during and after. The goal is to get this to the full Board in a couple months.
- E. Brian Newman Lindsay – The Department of Conservation is preparing to release an updated Future Force and Fire Capacity program guidelines for the climate bond. It's been a 9-month effort, the department doesn't do guidelines every year for every wrap of the program so this is an overhaul of the program from the 2021-22 guidelines, implementing the climate bond and the new forthcoming action plan update. This should come out in the next couple weeks and we will have a public comment period and some additional workshops. We are happy to talk to partner agencies and are particularly interested in local and regional partners such as feds, cities, and counties.
- F. Anale Burlew – As we are moving into the peak part of the fire year, we are now full staffed. The lack of snow is very concerning not only the Sierras but also the watersheds that depend on that water flow for the early part of the year to keep the fuels moist. We continue to watch that as we wait to get more rain in the next several months. Predictions are showing above normal fire activity for at least the next four months and that will probably continue unless there's a drastic change in the weather. The third C130 will be added to the aviation fleet in May. Most of the hand crews are completing their readiness drills right now so they should all be up and running this year. The Aliso Canyon Spring school yards grant funding applications are currently being accepted through May 29. Working closely with federal partners, both US Forest Service and DOI, as they are doing reorganization and restructuring of their organizations, especially their fire response model for DOI and moving to the US Wildland Fire Service. Both will have state directors in California for the Forest Service as well as DOI. Looking to see how that will affect, specifically on the Forest Service side, the research stations.
- G. Robert Troy – Next week is the California Emergency Services Associations Annual Conference that both the Director and Deputy Director will be attending. This occurs during Wildfire Preparedness Week and will be sure to incorporate that. Working hard to ensure that we maximize state funding streams before the end of this state fiscal year. It's more

complicated by the federal landscape but we are navigating that to make sure we can maximize all. We have a new DHS secretary under Mark Wayne Mullen; there's talk of trying to appoint a FEMA administrator sometime in the near future. The name that's being proposed is the first senior official performing the duties of FEMA administrator that began the administration. There was a verbal announcement that they have waived or done away with the policy of the DHS Secretary having to approve anything over \$100,000 out of the contracts or grants that has not come to fruition. We will still have several billion dollars of California money held up there. The State Hazard Mitigation Plan update is going to be kicking off on May 13 and appreciate all the engagement and support from the state family and local partners that helped make it the most robust document that it can be and will be set as a foundation for mitigation efforts in California. Thanks to MLCI and CNRA for the partnership on the Adaptation Planning Guide update.

- H. Staci Heaton – On Thursday our affiliate Golden State Connect Authority is going to break ground on the first project to lay open access fiber in out of our counties. It's important that we know how underserved and unserved some of our communities are in the instances of fire education communicating with people during wildfire situations and other emergencies where they need to evacuate. We are having our [County of the Chair meeting](#) this year on June 5 in Mariposa County. Our [Annual Meeting](#) is in Santa Barbara County the last week of September.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. Jason Willett, AAA

7. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026

- A. May 19, 2026
Natural Resources Headquarters Building, Room 2-221
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

8. MEETING ADJOURNED 3:03 PM